

Millions with food allergies to benefit as new allergen labelling law comes into force

The changes, also known as Natasha's Law, require businesses to label all food that is prepacked for direct sale with a full list of ingredients, with the [14 major allergens](#) emphasised in the list.

They were introduced following the death of Natasha Ednan-Laperouse, who died after eating a pre-packaged baguette which at the time did not require ingredients labelling.

Products that will now need to be labelled include pre-wrapped sandwiches, fast food that's already in packaging before a customer places their order, and supermarket items such as cheeses and meat from the deli counter that are already wrapped and ready to be served.

The new law applies to foods packaged on the same site at which they are sold before being ordered; foods pre-packaged elsewhere already require full ingredients labelling, with allergens emphasised in the list.

The law creates more consistency in the labelling of pre-packed products and gives more protection for people with food allergies and intolerances when purchasing 'grab and go' foods.

FSA Chief Executive Emily Miles said:

"This is a huge step in helping improve the quality of life for around 2 million people living with food allergies in this country.

"If these changes drive down the number of hospital admissions caused by food allergies, which has increased threefold over the past 20 years, and prevent further tragic deaths such as Natasha's, that can only be a positive thing.

"I understand how difficult the past 18 months have been for food businesses, and I am grateful for the effort that so many have made to prepare for the changes."

Except where circumstances require immediate action, local authorities responsible for enforcing the law are being advised to take a proportionate and risk-based approach to breaches of the law. The FSA is advising that minor errors are dealt with through extra guidance and support with the changes, particularly during the early months.

Natasha's parents, Nadim and Tanya Ednan-Laperouse, said:

"The introduction of Natasha's Law is a bittersweet moment for us. We are delighted that people with food allergies will now have great protection through improved labelling and we know in our hearts that Natasha would be very proud of a new law in her name. However, the new law also reminds us that Natasha's death was completely avoidable.

“Natasha’s Law is about saving lives and marks a major milestone in our campaign to support people in this country with food allergies.

“This change in the law will give people with food allergies confidence when they are buying pre-packaged food for direct sale such as sandwiches and salads. Everyone should be able to consume food safely.”

The FSA has been supporting businesses to prepare for the changes for well over a year, with tools to help them understand which products are covered by the new rules, labelling guidance and sector-specific advice available on [our online PPDS Hub](#).

Kate Nicholls, CEO of UKHospitality, said:

“Transparency around allergens is a key issue for our customers and the out-of-home sector continues to support the Government’s agenda on improving food safety and clarity of information available.

“We continue to work in partnership with the FSA to ensure this new legislation is clear for food businesses, customers and enforcement bodies, and we support the proposed proportionate and risk-based approach to implementing the new rules.”

The FSA is also encouraging consumers to make their allergies known to food business staff. This message was highlighted in our #SpeakUpForAllergies campaign earlier this year which encouraged young people to always speak about their allergies when ordering food.

More details and a [list of top tips for safely buying takeaway food](#) is available online.